

# NEWSLETTER

No 96 - June 2024



## ON THE AGENDA

### CHALLENGES AFTER THE LIBERATION

On Aug. 30 the History Chair of the Royal Military Academy (RMA) organizes a conference at their campus Conference Centre on the post-liberation period in September 1944, co-organized by SRAMA and the WHI. Registration is open until August 20.

► [Read more](#)



### BELGIAN GLOBAL EXPANSION (1830-1930)

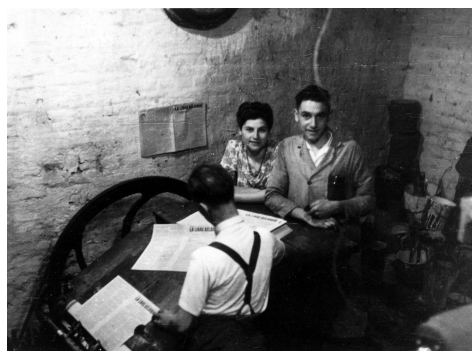
From Sept. 11 to 13, 2024, *KU Leuven* and *CegeSoma/State Archives* organize an international colloquium on Belgian imperialism and expansionism. Registration is now open.

► [Read more](#)

### CHANGING PERSPECTIVES ON RESISTANCE DURING WWII

From September 18 to 20, 2024, the History Department of the University of Antwerp organizes an international conference on the history of resistance during WWII, also focusing on conceptual and methodological evolutions. The Resistance History Network is a partner.

► [Read more](#)



### WIKIBASE RESISTANCE - SAVE THE DATE

On October 21, 2024, we will launch the first part of the national resistance online database, the result of the Wikibase Resistance project. More than 40,000 biographical records based on State Security archives relating to the Belgian Intelligence and Action Services are included. In the meantime, we are completing the encoding of Resistance members' personal files by the underground press.

► [Read more](#)

## RESEARCH

CONCILIARE



With partners from six countries, CegeSoma is participating in the new European project Conciliare (CONfidently ChangIng coLoniAl heRitagE), where we are responsible for the work package on public space. Alana Castro de Azevedo will conduct research on colonial heritage in three Belgian cities, Brussels, Antwerp and Mons.

► [Read more](#)



## PUBLICATIONS

### NEW ISSUE JBH

This diverse issue includes articles on the link between tourism politics and national identification in Belgium, the persecution of collaboration in the East Cantons after WWII, the administrative purge within the National Belgian Railway Company, and new perspectives on Flemish activism during WWI.

► [Read more](#)



### INVENTORY OF ARCHIVES OF THE AUDITORATE GENERAL (MILITARY JUSTICE)

The archives of the General Instructions Service of the Office of the Chief Military Prosecutor are now accessible thanks to a new inventory. The files of this service are essential for the study of the repression of collaboration after WWII. The archives can be consulted in the National Archives 2 (AGR2).

► [Read more](#)



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## September 1944: Belgium is liberated. What next ?

Exceptional conference jointly organized by The Friends of the Army Museum (KVVL-SRAMA) and the Chair of History of the Royal Military Academy (RMA), with the support of the War Heritage Institute (WHI)

World War II   [Conference](#)



After the liberation of Belgium in early September 1944, the country had to rebuild and faced new challenges. Five speakers will tell us about lesser known topics from this period of our history. These talks will be given in French (FR) and Dutch (NL).

### PROGRAM

- **12.30 p.m.** Welcome and registration
- **1:30 p.m.** Introduction
- **1:45 p.m.** *Democracy restored (1944-1946): between conservative restoration and social renewal* (NL), **Nico WOUTERS**, head of the CegeSoma / Belgian State Archives
- **2:30 p.m.** *The German prisoners of war in Belgium* (FR), **Pierre MULLER**, WHI Heritage Coordinating Unit
- **3:15 p.m.** *The execution of collaborators in Belgium after World War II* (NL), **Stanislas HORVAT**, Professor & Head of the Chair of Law at the Royal Military Academy and affiliated researcher at the *Vrije Universiteit Brussel*

- **4:00 p.m.** *Rebuilding the army, occupying Germany* (FR), **Jean-Michel STERKENDRIES**, Professor Emeritus of the Royal Military Academy
- **4:45 p.m.** *From the origins of the 1944 Social Pact to today's social security* (FR), **Vanessa AMBOLDI**, Director of the Centre d'Education Populaire André Genot (CEPAG)
- **5:30 p.m.** Closing

## PRESENTATIONS IN BRIEF

### ***De democratie hersteld (1944-1946): tussen conservatieve restauratie en sociale vernieuwing***

The Belgian democratic state was restored with astonishing speed in 1944-1946. This was not obvious after the severe systemic crisis of the 1930s and the fragmentation of state authority during the four years of occupation. This talk examines factors that contributed to this success. These include the importance of local authorities as state-bearers, the presence of the Allies, the restoration of a patriotic constitutional culture, the return of the participatory and state elites, and the social reforms associated with neo-corporatism.

### ***Les prisonniers de guerre allemands en Belgique***

How and why the Belgian government put German war prisoners to work in 1945-1948 to boost the Belgian economy and win the Battle for Coal.

### ***De terechtstelling van collaborateurs in België na de Tweede Wereldoorlog***

After the Second World War, 242 collaborators and war criminals condemned to death in Belgium were shot. These executions represent the culmination of post-war repression in the collective memory. Even today, many preconceived ideas and myths persist about these executions and the role of military justice.

### ***Reconstruire une armée, occuper l'Allemagne***

How did Belgium regain its place on the international stage, particularly in the settlement of German issues? Taking part in the occupation of the former Reich was imperative for a number of reasons, including the need to rebuild an army, which could only be done with British support.

### ***Des origines du Pacte social de 1944 à la sécurité sociale d'aujourd'hui***

Social Security as we know it today came into being with the Social Pact signed by unions and employers at the end of WWII. How did this Social Pact come about in the immediate post-war period, and what impact did it have on workers?



**30/08/2024 - 13:30 to 17:30**

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

**When:** Friday 30 August 2024 from 1.30 pm to 5.30 pm (reception from 12.30 pm)

**Where:** Conference center at the Royal Military School campus. Access through the security gate : 8 Rue Hobbema, 1000 Brussels.

Please bring your identity card (or passport)

Beware that no parking is available on the RMA campus.

**How to register :** For security reasons on the RMA campus, when you **register** with the KVVl-SRAMA Secretariat, preferably by email to [srt.sramakvvl@gmail.com](mailto:srt.sramakvvl@gmail.com) or by calling **02 737 78 90** (Tuesday or Thursday from 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.), please provide **your surname, first name and national registration number (on the back of your identity card)**



or, for non-Belgians, **the passport number**, both of yourself and, if applicable, the person accompanying you.  
**The list of participants will close on 20 August 2024.** After this date, registration is no longer possible.

### Main language

Dutch

French

### Partners



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# Pathways to Empire? Belgian Global Expansion 1830 - 1930

## Conference

**World War I**   [Colloquium](#)



On September 11-13, 2024, KU Leuven and Cegesoma will host an international conference on the interrelated themes of imperialism and Belgian expansionism. The contributions explore the theoretical and methodological challenges involved in writing new global histories of imperialism between 1830, when Belgium was founded, and the Great Depression of the 1930s.

### Keynotes

**Manu Karuka - Daniel Laqua - Amandine Lauro**

Barnard College

Northumbria University

Université libre de Bruxelles



On September 11-13, 2024, *KU Leuven* and CegeSoma/State Archives of Belgium will host an international conference on the interrelated themes of imperialism and Belgian expansionism. The conference explores the theoretical and methodological challenges involved in writing new global histories of imperialism between 1830, when Belgium was founded, and the Great Depression of the 1930s. Focusing on different actors, institutions, organizations, learned societies, and transnational associations involved in Belgian overseas expansion is an invitation to reflect on historical practices and present-day definitions of imperialism, colonization and empire, to apply this to the case of Belgian global expansion, and to transcend the conventional focus on the 'Great Powers'.

The first two days of the conference will take place at *KU Leuven* and the third day at CegeSoma.

We are happy to announce that you can now register for the conference. The **QR code** on the program and poster will guide you to the conference webpage where you can complete your registration.

**[The programme for the three days and all practical information can be found here](#)**



**11/09/2024 - 14:00 to 13/09/2024 - 13:30**

**Main language**

English

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## Changing Perspectives on Resistance during the Second World War

International Conference

**World War II**   [Conference](#)

# LA LIBRE BELGIQUE

Journal de patriotisme belge, ne se soumettant à aucune censure  
Régulièrement irrégulier. — Ne peut être vendu.

Adresse télégraphique :

OBERFELDKOMMANDANTUR — BRUXELLES.

REDACTION : se déplace traditionnellement dans  
une cave automobile.

Directeur responsable : PETER PAN, Jardin d'Egmont,  
Bruxelles.



**From 18 to 20 September 2024**, the Department of History of the University of Antwerp will host an international conference on the history of resistance during the Second World War, exploring its conceptual and methodological evolutions. Almost eighty years after the end of the Second World War and after the resistance to the fascist and nazi occupiers emerged from its shadows, this conference aims to unite the wealth of perspectives and insights generated by resistance historiography during these past decades.

The conference will include panels on the impact of prewar identities and experiences on resistance, female resistance, Jewish resistance, expanding the notion of resistance and resistance at the dawn of postwar society.

With **keynote speeches** by prof. Claire Andrieu (*Sciences Po*), dr. Jelena Batinic (Stanford University), prof. Emmanuel Debruyne (*UCLouvain*), prof. em. Paula Schwartz (Middlebury College) and prof. Ismee Tames (Utrecht University).

**Scientific committee:** prof. Koen Aerts (Ghent University), prof. Marnix Beyen (University of Antwerp), Michèle Corthals (University of Antwerp), prof. Emmanuel Debruyne (UCLouvain), prof. Pieter Lagrou (*Université libre de Bruxelles*), prof. Roschanack Shaery-Yazdi (University of Antwerp), Babette Weyns (Ghent University), dr. Nico Wouters (State Archives of Belgium).

**Welcome to this international conference, in which the Resistance History Network is a partner!**

[\*\*You can find the full programme on the conference website here\*\*](#)

[\*\*You can register here\*\*](#)



**18/09/2024 - 14:00 to 20/09/2024 - 19:00**

## **PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

**Date:** Wednesday 18 till Friday 20 September 2024

**Venue:** University of Antwerp, City Campus

**Wednesday 18 and Thursday 19 September 2024:** Klooster Grauwzusters - 7, Lange Sint-Annastraat - 2000 Antwerp

**Friday 20 September 2024:** Brantijser Building, 13, Sint-Jacobsmarkt - 2000 Antwerp

[Download a map of the campus](#) (Grauwzusters indicated as **s.S.** and Brantijser indicated as **s.SJ**)

## **Main language**

English

## Tens of thousands of biographical records on Belgian resistance fighters online from 21 October 2024!



The countdown has begun...

As of **21 October 2024**, a new online platform, the result of [the Wikibase Resistance Project](#), will provide you with progressive access to the biographical records on all the women and men who applied to Belgian state for recognition for their participation in the struggle against Nazi occupation between 1940 and 1944.

By this date, over 40,000 biographical files drawn up from the archives of the *Sûreté de l'Etat* and relating to Belgian intelligence and action services will be revealed.

In the meantime, the work continues... We are currently completing the encoding and checking of data from all the personal files relating to resistance fighters in the underground press.

But what is "Resistance through the underground press"? Belgians who obtained the status of "Resistance through the underground press" are people who volunteered within an organization for at least six months, between June 1, 1940 and June 4, 1944, to edit, print, build up depots, transport and systematically distribute press organs, leaflets, posters or announcements in conditions that exposed them to enemy reprisals.

While waiting for the big day when the platform goes online, we'll be giving you a weekly preview of what this new tool has to offer, and the many ways in which it can be exploited.

[Follow us now on Facebook](#) to find out the latest developments in the project, and to be at the forefront of our

efforts to lift the veil on this major achievement, the result of more than three years' hard work by a team of highly motivated scientists and volunteers.

#### Other news

[Inventory of the archives of the Public Prosecutor's Office attached to the Military Court](#)

[The Conciliare project has been launched at Cegesoma/ State Archives](#)

[The second issue of JBH has just been published](#)

[Brussels toponymy of yesterday and tomorrow](#)

[Young historians' day: Class of 2023, full of qualities!](#)

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[Occupation and everyday life: a new resource portal on World War II](#)

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## The Conciliare project has been launched at Cegesoma/ State Archives



### What is it about?

The Conciliare project (CONFidently ChangIng coLoniAl heRitage) is a European project involving partners from 6 countries. (Belgium, Netherlands, Portugal, Italy, Finland and Croatia; HORIZON-CL2-2022-HERITAGE-01-03 - Cultural heritage in transformation - facing change with confidence). In addition to its international dimension, it brings together researchers from different disciplines (social psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists and historians), as well as associations such as ICOM Belgique Wallonie-Bruxelles and Afropean Project...

### Why this project?

European societies are currently facing unprecedented changes in the way they manage the cultural heritage of their colonial past. Challenges are emerging in fields as diverse as education through textbooks, museums through the question of provenance and restitution, the public sphere through the persistence of the colonial past, or in popular traditions such as that of the Black Peter (*Zwarte Piet*).

The aim of the project is not only to study this heritage, its challenges and controversies, but also to work towards an understanding of the phenomena involved, and thus nurture a new relationship of trust in relation to this cultural heritage.



## What is CegeSoma's role?

CegeSoma coordinates the WP 2 on public spaces. It includes Belgian, Portuguese and Italian universities, as well as the non-profit organization Afropean Project. As places of memory and embodiment of colonial cultural heritage, public spaces have been the subject of studies focusing on monuments and, more recently, street names. Certain groups - such as the colonized - and certain facts - such as colonial violence - are largely absent, while other representations of the colonial period remain very present and dominant. Beyond their relative absence, the colonized are often represented as nameless, submissive or in humiliating positions, or through exotic representations. WP2 will analyze the contested colonial cultural heritage in public spaces in large and medium-sized European cities (Belgium, Italy and Portugal). The goal is to identify this heritage and its origins, as well as the ways in which it is contested and the actors involved.

To this end, researcher [Alana Castro de Azevedo](#) has been recruited to conduct research into the identification of colonial heritage in the three Belgian cities selected: Brussels, Antwerp and Mons. Following this initial phase of heritage identification, forms of contestation will be studied in depth in a number of cases. **Chantal Kesteloot** is responsible for the overall coordination of WP 2.

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## The second issue of JBH has just been published



This second issue of 2024 contains four separate articles. In the first (English-language) article, **Silke Geven** (PhD, University of Antwerp) and **Gerrit Verhoeven** (FED-tWIN researcher, University of Antwerp and Royal Museum of Art and History) link the study of tourism policy in Belgium to the insights of nationalism studies. This article examines how that awareness about the importance of tourism for national identification evolved and exactly which (Belgian or Flemish) nationalism was intended to be promoted.

In turn, historian and archivist **Davina Beckers** (advisor-archivist for the company Exquando at the Historical Archives Service at the European Commission) applies micro-analysis to the post-war punishment of collaboration in the East Cantons. Through an individual case study, namely of the collaborating woman Sybille Bredohl, she examines how the Belgian military justice system dealt with this particular category of German-speaking collaborators during World War II.

The third contribution comes from Dutch historian **Kris van der Aar** (Master of History and Research Master of Historical, Cultural & Literary Studies, Radboud University in Nijmegen), who makes an important contribution to the history of administrative purges, more specifically in the Belgian railways. Van der Aar uses linguistic analysis and comes up with new explanations for the mild purge among SNCB/NMBS-personnel after the war.

The fourth and final article comes from doctor of history **Bruno Yammine**. He presents new insights on Flemish Activism during the First World War. Yammine concludes that contrary to the current dominant view in research, the so-called Flemish declaration of independence of December 1917 was not an autonomous decision of the 'Council of Flanders'. On the contrary, he argues that Governor-General von Falkenhausen, with the support of the German army leadership, supported the initiative, as the next logical step of German Flamenpolitik.

This issue is priced at 15 euros (excluding postage) and can be ordered from Hilde Keppens, CegeSoma, Square de l'Aviation 29, 1070 Brussels, +32 2/556 92 11 - [hilde.keppens@arch.be](mailto:hilde.keppens@arch.be).

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## Inventory of the archives of the Public Prosecutor's Office attached to the Military Court

General Instructions Department. Series of documentation files (mainly) 1944-1953



The archives of the General Instructions Department (Service des Instructions Générales/Dienst voor Algemene Onderrichtingen) of the Public Prosecutor's Office attached to the Military Court (auditoraat-generaal bij het Militair Gerechtshof/ Auditorat général près la Cour militaire) were formerly known as the fonds 'AA1882', which was originally held by CegeSoma. They can now be consulted in [the National Archives 2 - Joseph Cuvelier Repository \(ARA2\)](#).

The importance of this department's files for research into, among other things, the prosecution of collaboration after World War II (what is commonly referred to as 'the Repression') cannot be overstated. After all, the General Instructions Department was tasked with providing magistrates with a body of decision-making documentation regarding "all questions of interpretation of laws, decrees, etc., as well as all questions of principle". Efficiency and uniformity in prosecution policy and jurisprudence were the watchwords. Throughout the course of its existence, the department produced thousands of thematic files on a range of subjects, which were classified according to a series of categories, including an extensive "varia" section.

The General Instructions Department was disbanded at the end of 1953. Its strictly documentary tasks were



assigned to a new Documentation Department, which remained in place until the military courts were abolished in peacetime (2003). The Documentation Department set about systematically analysing the files of its predecessor to enrich its own files, which included documents related to a variety of topics relevant to the military courts even after the Repression.

## [The inventory \(pdf version\) can be downloaded here.](#)

Would you prefer a paper version? Then head to [the National Archives](#) or [the National Archives 2 - Joseph Cuvelier Repository \(ARA2\)](#), or place your order at [publicat@arch.be](mailto:publicat@arch.be).

DESMET Gertjan, *Inventaris van het archief van het auditoraat-generaal bij het Militair Gerechtshof: Dienst voor Algemene Onderrichtingen: Reeks documentatiedossiers ((vnl.) 1944-1953)*, series Inventarissen Algemeen Rijksarchief 2 - depot Joseph Cuvelier no. 69, publication no. 6474, Algemeen Rijksarchief, Brussels, 2024, €20.00 (+ shipping).

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